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and the worst of all is the working for evil *without* any sense of it.

Finally, there is an uniform connection between the work of great imaginative power and accuracy of representation. It is a two-fold connection. Firstly, if the painter have genius in him, it can hardly show itself unless he is faithful in his work ;—but, secondly, if he have genius, he is quite sure to be faithful in his work. Of the great imaginative painters or poets there is not one who is not eminent as an

observer. The greater the man the more accurate his observation.

The lesson we draw from this for the young artist is, similarly, two-fold. Work faithfully, and if there be power in you it will soon make itself manifest to you and to the world. And, if you feel no impulse to work faithfully, be sure there is no power in you. If you feel the impulse, and, from any idleness, or haste to make money, or any other reason, neglect to obey it, you will never be an artist worthy of the name.

J. S.

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### OUR "ARTICLES" EXAMINED.

*An Essay Read before the Society, Tuesday Evening, June 9th, 1863.*

BY RUSSELL STURGIS, JR.

Concluded.

THE students of the Gothic Art had begun by mistaking the accidental for the essential; they had seized only the apparent and the least important parts, and had assumed to be fact a vast deal that was not. Their improvement in knowledge consisted only in discovering the vital principles of the art they were studying.

Let us notice some of these vital principles, and the extent to which they have governed modern work, especially in England.

First.—Variety, independence of narrow restrictions. It must again be repeated that what are commonly called Gothic forms are often quite unnecessary to Gothic work. Anything, sharp, angular, spiry, thorny, knotty, octagon instead of round, pointed instead of flat, will commonly pass for Gothic, if it claims to be.

But these are peculiarities of certain schools, only, of the Gothic Architecture; and of these in their late and corrupt rather than in their pure and perfect state. It seems settled that any sign of quatrefoils in circular panels or cusps in square ones, geometrical tracery of any kind anywhere, buttresses between windows, whether the walls receive a thrust from within or not, battlements of all sizes and

materials, on cornices, on chimney-tops, flat against the wall, over doors and windows,—it seems settled that all these are parts of the modern idea of Gothic, and that their presence will gothicize anything. But they do not, all of them together, make up Gothic-Architecture, nor does their absence necessarily deprive a building of its Gothic character. The pointed arch and the high pitched roof come nearer being characteristic of Gothic and essential to it than any other features. But the Architect who rightly understands his style will build you a house without a pointed arch in it, or one without a steep roof, or one with neither, which shall yet be perfectly a Gothic building. On the whole the pointed arch is the most necessary feature. Perhaps a public building entirely without it would put in but a contested claim to purity of style, but a humbler building has restrictions, one of which may often control the form of its window heads. So we have learned to regard Gothic sculptured ornament as prickly, thistly, all oak-leaves and sharp points. This is true of the latest and worst German Gothic; it is to some extent true of all the later Northern Gothic, though rather of its worse than of its better

examples; it is hardly true at all of early Northern work; it is entirely untrue of Southern work, early or late. So, we imagine that our hand-rails, mantels, library-tables, arm-chairs, must all have pointed arches and geometric tracery worked into them. But it is not so. I grant that most of the existing mediæval furniture is more or less marked by these peculiarities. But this is because nearly all that remains to us is, naturally, of a late and vulgarized age.

The complete and general recognition of these truths, was the beginning of modern Architecture. The Architects were left free to build what was required of them, dwelling or church or palace or warehouse, or monument or bridge, to arrange it for convenience, to bring this convenience into graceful assemblage of parts, to carve and color as opportunity should offer, and to do all in accordance with their conceptions of duty both as builders and artists. The edifice might adapt itself to its place and its work. There are no laws in Gothic Art to compel artificial and uniform grouping. The mansion among level lawns might indeed be regular and composed of equal and balanced masses, and it was well that it should be,—but the villa among mountains would perch itself upon the crest of its hill or nestle into its side, would thrust forward a tower to secure the distant view and to rise high among the trees, and would stretch its offices and stables into some hollow where they would be almost unseen. The large country church might follow the old mediæval type, cruciform in plan, Nave, Aisles, Transepts, Choir and Chapels complete,—but the church built among narrow and crooked streets could have no such liberty; it must appropriate the whole of its contracted and irregular site; the tower must go where it can, and the parish-school must be put where it will hear the Apse—no matter, out of these untoward circumstances, convenience and beauty can be brought. The palace shall stand square and uniform, enclosing its formal quadrangles with ranges of stately rooms, and long arcades for splendor and display. The Town-hall shall stand high on its open vault, supported by

squat columns and piers, affording sheltered space below for business gatherings, bargain and sale, and meetings and greetings of friends. And all these buildings shall be decorated as richly as we can afford, but always appropriately to their purpose, and always in such manner as shall best compel and then reward attentive examination.

We are gliding insensibly into the consideration of our second vital principle of Gothic Art,—Adaptability to all purposes.

Do you think, now, that a stable or a chicken-house can be made an interesting and handsome building, and yet be appropriate, or that a laborer's cottage or any such necessarily inexpensive building can be made at all pleasing—in itself, I mean, not by accessories of garden and climbing plants? These things certainly cannot be done in any of the classical styles. These styles depend upon stateliness and great size and *expense, expense*, for any effect they may be capable of producing. But the Gothic will do anything, from a log hut up, and will make good Art out of anything.

Some one will say—"But the common brick houses in New York, the ordinary white frame houses in the villages are not Gothic; if you make them so they would certainly cost more." No, they are not Gothic, and they are built at the minimum of expense, that is true. Ornament of any kind costs something. No Art is cheaper than the cheapest Art. But if you seek anything pleasanter than naked brick walls with square lintels and window sills, if you seek to add any beauty to your dwelling, within or without, you will find that such small sums as you can devote to the purpose are economically, because effectively, used only in Gothic work. I say, if you seek to add *beauty*, of course you can do as your neighbors do, if that is any gain. Instead of plain stones across the tops of your windows, you can have them project a little, with some moldings, and your house will rise a degree in the scale of "gentility;" enclose your windows entirely with stone trimmings, and you secure another step towards what is fashionable. But all this gratifies no one

feeling but pride; you are spending your money merely to emulate your richer or surpass your poorer neighbors. Certainly the brown stone architrave with the invisible moldings, of which you wouldn't know the profile if you should look out daily, for ten years, through the windows they surround, and look up as often, to greet your children as you come home at evening,—certainly this does not gratify your sense of beauty. Try and think of something that would, and you will find that it can be given you more cheaply and more naturally in the Gothic than in any other style of building that has ever existed. Make window heads of pointed arches,—there is a wonderful gain,—it would puzzle you to devise a lovelier form composed of simple lines and easily built. A pointed arch of brick is not expensive, there are thousands and thousands of square window heads about us that cost more, and are not very splendid. If you can afford a little more ornamental work,—have a trefoiled or cusped arch to each opening. There is a higher order still of beauty. Build a twenty-five foot front of good brick, every window having a gracefully-proportioned trefoiled head, and, let us say, stone caps for the arches to spring from; and you cannot make that house ugly, or unattractive. Add a little color. Use two or three kinds of brick, deep red, light buff and black, have the brick arches varied in these three colors, use them moderately in stripes or otherwise on the wall surface; all this will add to the expense of your house only the cost of very careful "laying up."

Or, suppose you have five hundred dollars to spend for a still higher sort of decoration. Have some white marble capitals, delicately carved, use shafts of dark, polished stone, granite or slate or limestone, to flank your entrance doorway, and to separate your double or triple arcaded windows, and set your capitals upon them. These sculptures may represent the flowers that you love best, gathered and arranged as your daughters arrange their spring bouquets; or they may perpetuate through the year the foliage of the trees you most regret to see bare of leaves in winter; or they may show

birds and squirrels and how they carry themselves among the trees they haunt. I can imagine a wealthy citizen favored with such a house as this, counting it among his pleasures on reaching home that, as he opens his door, he has another look at the carving around it.

Here is a colored drawing of a painted glass factory in London. The building is cheap, it is arranged strictly for economical uses, it is entirely of brick except about a dozen stone window heads of peculiar form in the second story. But is it not rather ornamental? You see, every window is a pointed arch, the roof is very steep, there are high and large dormer windows of brick; and the whole building is brilliant with color, four distinct tints being employed in various combinations. Don't you think a street of such buildings, or of buildings in the many fashions of which this is one, would be handsomer and more interesting to walk through daily than even our extravagant and grandiose Fifth Avenue?

It is one of the claims of classical Architecture to be especially well-fitted for what are called monumental purposes. It is often urged that only the revived Roman can build triumphal arches and put up memorial columns. But the experience of the last twenty years seems to contradict this assertion. The English have built monuments of all kinds, private and public, in the plainest and in the most ornate Gothic, and have found the style as plastic in this work as in house building. Mr. G. G. Scott, who never does anything except what is purely Gothic in character, had a memorial to erect to the Westminster scholars who fell in the Crimea, and it was decided that this must be a column. Now of all things foreign to the spirit of mediæval work, a memorial column would seem to be the most remote. But Mr. Scott did his work successfully, put up a shaft on a high pedestal, with a rich capital, and surmounting all a group of St. George and the dragon. It sounds wonderfully conventional. But it is wonderfully original; we discover that there is life after all in an old idea, and we owe the discovery to Mr. Scott's complete grasp of the subject.

There is just one grain of truth deep

down under the assertion that classic Art is the right one for monumental work. It is this, that the Gothic seeks generally to do what is natural and useful, and does not run to *mere* display. There is not, for instance, a single "Triumphal Arch" anywhere in the Gothic style, either ancient or modern. An archway in a wall shall be as ornamental as we have means to make it, but it does not chime with our ideas of the fit and natural, to set up a great archway where there is no wall, a door without an enclosure. The exceeding unfitness of this proceeding is sufficiently shown by the fact that many of the great arches in Europe are always railed in, the travel passing around them to left and to right;—the Arc de l'Etoile, for instance, and the London "Marble Arch."

Buildings like these have the one object of glorifying the king who orders or the city that pays for them. But, under the Gothic dispensation, the ambitious city will spend its surplus in splendid and stately civic buildings, town halls or bell towers; and the vain prince will build churches, or a huge library and picture-gallery. You know how Venice glorified St. Marks; during the years that the church was in course of erection the wealth of Venice was lavished upon it, and the trophies of foreign war were built into its walls or set up on its facade. Suppose they had built a triumphal arch, like those that Napoleon inflicted on Paris, would they have carved their other buildings as they now have? Moreover, a city must have buildings for religion and for law, and these will infallibly cost money. Why not then make these the monuments of your wealth and splendor? Why erect great masses that recall nothing, that represent nothing, that answer no good purpose? The great days of architecture have always been those of useful building made magnificent, and not of magnificence without object. The men who know not how to make a church interesting and precious are those who long for porticos and gateways.

We spoke above of furniture, and certainly nothing needs more speedily the interposition of something that can save it from the ugliness in which it revels. Probably there is no part of

our surrounding that is so devoid of beauty as our furniture. The very simplest, seeking only economy of material and readiness of construction, has a certain pleasingness, for instance, the Kentucky chairs, with round bars like thick broomsticks for legs and back, which chairs are certainly excellent in design. So with the plain, white-pine tables we buy for our kitchens, which are as good as a man-of-war's deck, from the same reasons of cleanliness and the beauty of the wood. But from this up in the scale of cost, the furniture grows steadily uglier at every step; though of course with exceptions, sometimes accidental, sometimes of necessity, rarely of purpose. I suppose we generally look upon this state of things with equanimity, believing it, probably, the natural state of furniture. But it would sufficiently astonish any fourteenth century carpenter, could he come back to earth for a moment. And Mr. Sedden and Mr. Shaw, would not view it with equanimity. They do not. They have designed good furniture in England: so have one or two here. The principles are simple, the chances for original designs are abundant. The Gothic Art will meet this case like all others: we shall yet see good furniture, perhaps before we get good houses to put it in.

The third vital principle is that this Gothic Art can perfectly use all materials. Of the truth of this we have already seen some evidence. It is one of the great requirements of Gothic work, that every material shall be so used as to do its work in the best manner with the least unemployed weight and strength; and so displayed and decorated as to speak for itself, and show in what manner it does its work. In the Middle Ages every town built in the materials it could best procure, the Northern in limestone and oak, the Southern in brick and polished marble; it was only Venice that brought all her stones from over sea. In our time we are allowed a wider choice, but still the healthy, popular architecture is that which grows naturally out of the neighboring stone quarries or clay fields. And the architect building at the same time in the sandstone country of New Jersey, among the Massachusetts granite quarries, and somewhere on our Southern coast where timber and only

timber abounds, must needs make very different designs for these differing occasions. Well for him if he has been brought up in a living school of Architecture, to the pupils of which all things are possible.

The fourth vital principle of Gothic Art, and the last which I wish to cite at present is its surpassing capacity for adornment. We have seen that it can do without it better than other styles. We have also alluded to the rich decorations of which it is capable. To more than allude to it is not possible on this occasion. The energetic Middle Ages created the art and brought it to a certain perfection, and they built more and greater buildings than any succeeding time of greater population, peace and prosperity. But they never exhausted the style, nor did they even so much as indicate all it is capable of. The most earnest modern workers in it are but now discovering the wonderful riches of splendor and beauty that are at their disposal.

In considering what modern times have done toward the restoration of Gothic Art, I have spoken chiefly of England. I have done so, because the English Architects are further advanced than any others, having emancipated themselves fairly from servile copying of mediæval work, and being on the threshold of a style that seems to have infinite power of development. The designs of such men as Street are as absolutely new as were the French cathedrals of the thirteenth century. Moreover, a new school of architectural sculpture seems about to arise, which shall restore to us something like the glory of the lost Gothic carving. And, finally, the new Gothic is the reigning style in England, having fairly overcome all opposition, and occupying the attention of all the able men who care for Architecture. The English Architects, therefore, have deserved well of the world.

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